

# THE OLDTIMER

Volume 34, Number 2

The Newsletter of the Josephine County Historical Society

May 1999

## We Have a Date

### MAY

• **All Month.** The town of Grants Pass will be celebrating *Amazing May*. The JCHS is a prominent player in this celebration.

• **Saturday, May 15 at 1:00 p.m.** "The Moving People," a talk on the State of Jefferson by Frederick Reenstjerna will be held in the barn behind the Schmidt House. Sponsored by the Oregon Council for the Humanities, admission is FREE.

• **Saturday, May 22 at 4:00 p.m.** The membership potluck will be held at the Schmidt House, gardens and barn. As this is considered a non-business meeting, please bring your own utensils and a dish to share, as well as a friend who may be interested in joining the society!

• **Saturday, May 29.** Come and watch us "float" down 6th Street as one of the participants in the Boatnik Parade. Board member Nancy Campbell is designing a float with a historical theme to celebrate "A Blast from the Past."

• **Saturday, June 12 at 10:00 a.m.** Come float down the river with the JCHS on a two-hour Hellgate Jetboat Scenic Excursion. Bob Pruitt and an experienced jetboat pilot will be your guide!

• **Friday evening, July 30.** The annual pie social will be held at the same time as the "Back to the 50's Classic Car Cruise." Bring a comfortable seat, the cars will cruise by on 5th Street.



*Dressed as Celestine S. Hobbs for the Christmas Pageant*

Mollie says, "These events will be 'fun' fundraising to help the historic Schmidt House and gardens pay their own expenses. I'm open to all suggestions for either the house, barn, gardens or all three; for meetings, special events, etc. If anyone has ideas for me, my number is 479-2330, or phone the Society at 479-7827. Please call, and let's talk!"

## *The Unsinkable Mollie Means* by Lee Ann Tardieu

Born in Los Angeles, California, Mollie moved to Grants Pass in 1971 so that she could raise her family in a more desirable location. Currently, Mollie spends most of her time as the new JCHS Event Coordinator, although many of you might know her from the hours she spends volunteering for Rogue Music Theater. An ordained minister, Mollie has been involved in the community with such programs as MADD, the American Heart Association, the Chamber of Commerce, Easter Seals, the Boys and Girls Club and the All Sports Park, just to name a few.

Mollie believes in volunteering because, "you get back what you give." The JCHS was lucky enough to find her in 1996 when she volunteered her time to help with the Society's Style Show.

The Schmidt House, gardens and barn cost the JCHS approximately \$575.00 each month to operate. Hiring Mollie as an Event Coordinator, the board hopes to utilize her skills to arrange, schedule, advertise and supervise events to be held on the property. Paid on a commissioned basis, she will coordinate every aspect of this service, bringing the Society the necessary funds to help the Schmidt House "pay for itself" each month.

Mollie has already had a few programs on the grounds, including a rummage sale. Mollie began in May, and her position will be evaluated in November. We wish you well, Mollie!



# Letters to the Editor

JCHS:

Today in the mail I received the information that you sent on waterfalls. I want to express my thanks.

Not having access to any "outside" library has been a big roadblock in my research.

Again, thank you for your time and efforts on my behalf.

**Robert C. Howard**  
Eastern Oregon Corr. Inst.

**Molly Means:**

Thank you for the wonderful Womens' History Program you and the JCHS Actors presented at our February 25 meeting. The program was well received and appreciated by all.

**Cheryl Walker, Secretary**  
Jo. Co. Republican Women

**Jean Boling:**

Just wanted to acknowledge receipt of the information you sent me on Mr. Briggs, and to thank you for taking the time to research the material! I appreciate the effort required.

We were treated extremely well by everyone we met there in Grants Pass.

Again, thank you for the great information.

**Larry G. Troxell, MBA**  
Tulsa, Oklahoma

**Michael Oaks:**

It was wonderful to get more new information on Fred Leslie Wright's family and their activities.

I want to thank you again for all your help--you do a wonderful service for the JCHS.

**Alan Wright**  
awright@cyberhighway.net

**JCHS:**

Thank you for the bookmarks and books which were donated to the St. Anne Catholic School's Jog-A-Thon. We really appreciate your support!!

**Megan and Mark Stutzman**  
Coordinators

**Rose Scott:**

On behalf of the Oregon Historical Society, I want to thank you for recently hosting the *AT&T Treasures of Oregon* traveling exhibit. It was a pleasure visiting Grants Pass.

The visit was a great opportunity to inform and excite citizens about Oregon's rich state and regional history, and the local historical organizations and resources which preserve that history. We sincerely appreciate your assistance in welcoming the exhibit to your community, and for the extra time and effort you generously provided. On behalf of OHS, please thank each local staff member or volunteer who contributed their time as well.

We hope the partnership and mutual participation in this project serves as a springboard for future collaborations between the OHS and the JCHS.

**Chet Orloff**  
Executive Director

**JCHS:**

The Grants Pass Chamber of Commerce wishes to thank you for the *Josephine County Historical Highlights Volume I & II* which was donated to the Frank Wells Memorial Scholarship Fund.

**Dwight F. Ellis**  
Executive Director

**Rose Scott:**

Thanks for including me in the lecture series again. I had a fine time and enjoyed the lively crowd.

**Tom Nash**  
Southern Oregon University

*Editor's Note:*

A Professor of English and Honors, Tom entertained a crowd of 40-45 people at the Schmidt House in March with the program, "Gouge Eye, Lemiti, and Noti: The Colorful Stories Behind Oregon Landmarks." This program, sponsored by the JCHS was funded by the Oregon Council for the Humanities.

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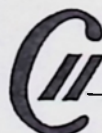
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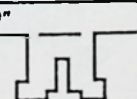
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### Special Edition Newspapers

by Darlene Leach

**Grants Pass Courier Golden Anniversary Edition - Grants Pass Courier, \$10.00; \$2.00 for Shipping and Handling fees.**

The B&B Food Store sale advertisement in the *Grants Pass Courier* listed specials which included one pound of Maxwell House Coffee for 30 cents, four pounds of macaroni for 23 cents, one gallon of tomato juice for 27 cents, three packages of Jello for 19 cents, and two Sunbrite cleansers for five cents. The State Theater ad was showing a musical western featuring Gene Autry and the Singing Cowboys for an admission of 25 cents for adults and 10 cents for kiddies. The Golden Rule Department Store was celebrating its 30th Anniversary, and the Ford Auto Dealer was running a contest offering to send three girls, all expenses paid, to the Pacific International Exposition in San Diego.

Published on Wednesday, April 3, 1935, this is not only a celebration of the *Courier's* founding in 1885, but also a chronicle of the rich history of Grants Pass and Josephine County. Reaching back to the early 1800's, when the area was a raw, rough and wild frontier, the seven sections of this edition present a vivid portrayal, in historically accurate detail, of the transformation of Grants Pass to a city.

One section describes the Indians savagely defending their land from the early settlers. Another section covers the era for discovery of gold, copper, quartz and other minerals, and how an industry was born. The Pioneer section features, in their own words, the stories of settlers who were arriving from all over the U.S.

Another section shows how Grants Pass, by the 1880's, was taking on the shape of a city with the formation of civic, social and political organizations. The wealth of the community was increasing, aided by the climate and recreation opportunities attractive to tourists, along with the economic benefits of farming, lumbering and mining.

This review only skims the surface of the wealth of information to be discovered in this edition. It is a golden opportunity for lovers of history, newcomers, and students to learn about the colorful and intriguing past of Grants Pass. Hurry in soon; only a few left!

***Mondays Make History Volumes I & II - Grants Pass Daily Courier, \$1.00.***

Pamphlets of stories chosen from our history series in the Monday issues of the *Daily Courier*. Written by members of the community.

***Sourdough Gazette - Sourdough Miners, \$1.00.***

Mining information, maps and history of this Josephine County group from the years 1964, 1965, 1968, 1973, 1974 and 1978.

***People of the Valley - Grants Pass Daily Courier, \$1.00.***

Published in 1994, this is a three-sectioned history of the people, places and industries that helped shape our community: Pioneer Spirit; They Came for Gold; A Link to Other Communities.

### Commemorative Plates

A new feature in our gift shop is the display of an item of special interest and quality. On consignment, we have plates from the T.L. Jones Memorial United Methodist Church in Wilderville. A picture of the church is located on the front of the plate, and a short narrative history is on the back. **\$10.00 per plate.**

### Laminator

We have a new laminator in our Bookshop! What does this mean, you ask? Well, if you have ID cards, recipe cards or luggage tags which you'd like to have laminated (up to 3" x 5"), bring them in and we'll take care of the process for you! **\$1.00 per item.**

### Tell Your Friends. . .

Send a friend to our Research Library; we'll give them a deal, and you could win the Caveman Bridge! Look for more details in this newsletter.

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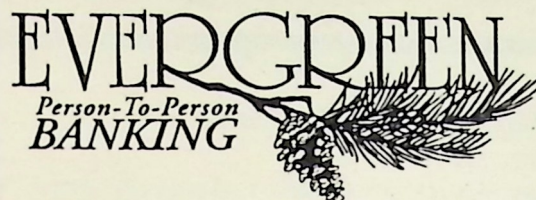




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## History at the Center

### Laws of Genealogy

You've heard of Murphy's Law, correct? Well, if you don't stay up to date on your family's history, this too, may happen to you!

1. The document containing evidence of the missing link in your research invariably will be lost due to fire, flood or war.
2. The keeper of the vital records you need will just have been insulted by another genealogist.
3. Your great, great, grandfather's obituary states that he died, leaving no issue of record.
4. The town clerk you wrote to in desperation, and finally convinced to give you the information you need, can't write legibly, and doesn't have a copying machine.
5. The will you need is in the safe on board the "Titanic."
6. The spelling of your European ancestor's name bears no relationship to its current spelling or pronunciation.
7. That ancient photograph of four relatives, one of whom is your progenitor, carries the names of the other three.
8. Copies of old newspapers have holes which occur only on last names.
9. No one in your family tree ever did anything noteworthy, always rented property, was never sued, and was never named in wills.

10. You learned the Great Aunt Matilda's executor just sold her life's collection of family genealogical materials to a flea market dealer "somewhere in New York City."

11. Yours is the only last name not found among the three billion in the world-famous Mormon Archives in Salt Lake City.

12. Ink fades and paper deteriorates at a rate inversely proportional to the value of the data recorded.

13. The 37-volume, 16,000 page history of your county of origin ISN'T INDEXED.

14. The critical link in your family tree is named "Smith."

But seriously, folks, to ensure that the history of our County is preserved, the Society realizes the importance of keeping documents on file of those families residing in Josephine County. Please take a moment to fill out the following form (or copy this form if you don't want to destroy this copy of the OLD TIMER) and return it to us so that we may record the list in our archives.

Please don't forget: today's news is tomorrow's history! That includes photographs, too. If you'd like to donate a few photographs with the family history form, please do! Some of the family histories turned in may be used in future editions of our newsletter. Thank you for taking the time to respond.

### Black Forest Family Restaurant

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*Find us between "D" & "E" Streets*  
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*Grants Pass Shopping Center*  
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## From the

## Bookshop

### Our Latest in Indian History



<i>The Forgotten Tribes , Oral tales of the Tenios</i>	12.95
<i>Thunder over the Ochoo - Series</i>	
Vol. I The Gathering Storm	16.95
Vol. II Distant Thunder	16.95
Vol. III Lightning Strikes	19.95
Vol. IV Rain of Tears	19.95
Vol. V and the Juniper Trees Bore Fruit Available in Sept.	

*This is a wonderful series and excellent reading.*

### New for our Railroad Fans



<i>Early American Locomotives with 147 engravings</i>	10.95
<i>The Railroad - Life in the Old West series</i>	7.95

### Like Gold strike it rich/ Gold Rush Days



<i>Where to Find Gold in Oregon - Maps and Directions</i>	19.95
<i>Hoffmans Rock Hound Guide - How to Pan for Gold</i>	9.95
<i>Gold Rush - Life in the Old West Series</i>	7.95

### Pioneers of the Wagon Trains



<i>In search of Oregon's Lost Blue Bucket Mine</i>	12.95
<i>A Woman's Diary of the Barlow Road of the Oregon Trail</i>	9.95
<i>Over the Applegate Trail to Oregon 1846 - with the Pringle Diarys</i>	13.95

### For Logging Fans

<i>This is Logging and Sawmilling</i>	19.95
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### For Those who Like to enjoy our Oregon Country, Places to see, Things to do



<i>Oregon Caves</i>	14.95
<i>The Rogue: a River to Run</i>	16.95
<i>Campers Guide to Oregon and Wash.</i>	14.95
<i>Oregon Campgrounds, Hiking Guide</i>	14.95
<i>Fishing the Oregon Country</i>	10.95

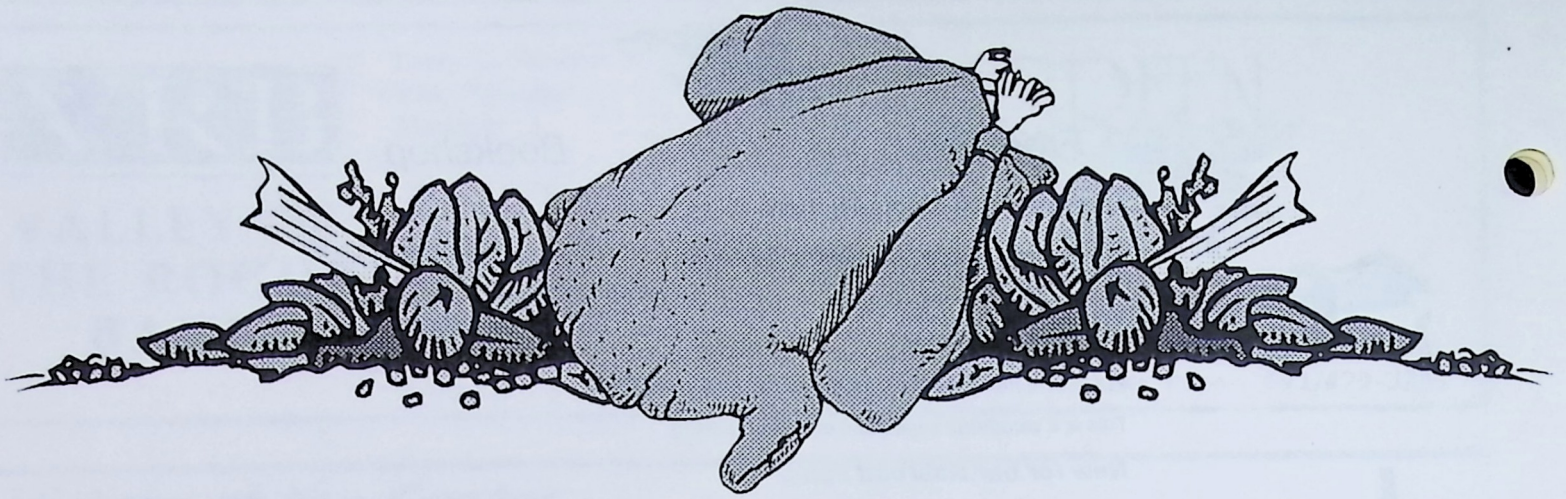
### Last but Not Least- Our Old Standbys Josephine County History



<i>Josephine County Historical Highlights Vol.I and Vol.II</i>	14.95 ea.
<i>Sailors Diggings'</i>	6.95
<i>Mythical State of Jefferson - Picture History Early Cal. And Southern Or</i>	15.00
<i>Golden Days and Pioneer Ways</i>	15.95
<i>Grants Pass the Golden Years</i>	9.95
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*Books may be ordered by Mail. Send Title, Amount plus Shipping and Handling \$3.00 for the first book and \$2.00 ea for each additional.*





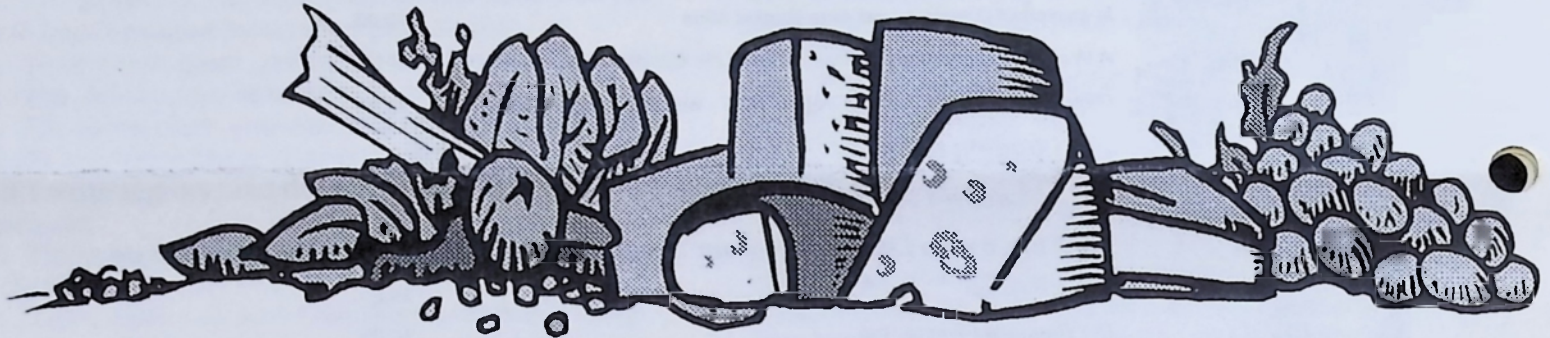
Josephine County Historical Society

Potluck

Saturday, May 22, 1999

4:00 PM

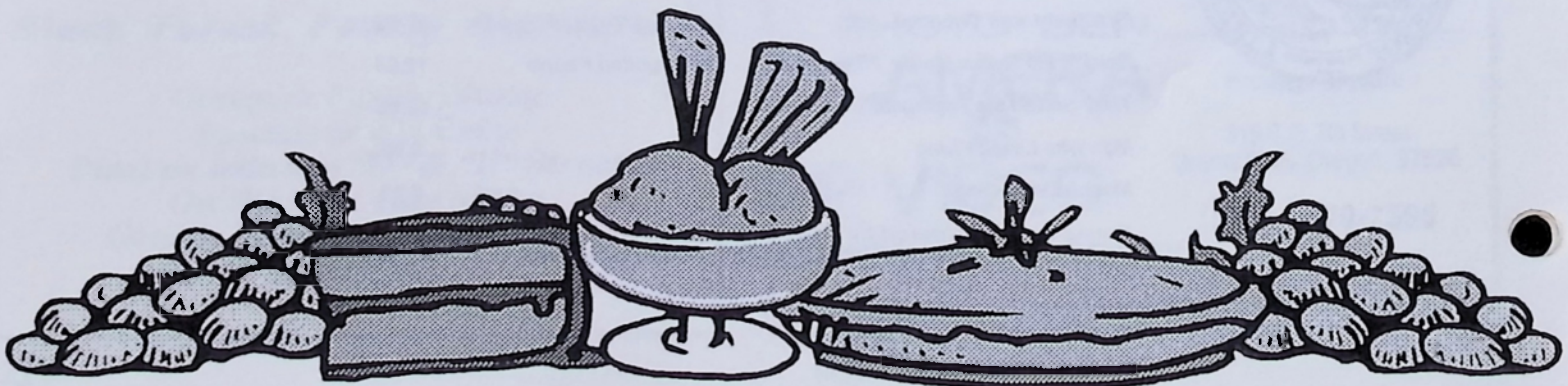
Schmidt House Garden, 508 SW Fifth St.



The public is invited to  
eat and mingle.

Come meet us, enjoy our garden,  
tour the Schmidt House and Research Library.

Please bring your own utensils  
And a dish to share!





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The Family of: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Place of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents: \_\_\_\_\_

I went to school in: \_\_\_\_\_ I served in the: \_\_\_\_\_

I had \_\_\_\_\_ brothers and \_\_\_\_\_ sisters. Their names are: \_\_\_\_\_

Our family moved to Josephine County in: \_\_\_\_\_ because: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ We lived at: \_\_\_\_\_

I married: \_\_\_\_\_ on: \_\_\_\_\_ in the town of: \_\_\_\_\_

My spouse's parents were: \_\_\_\_\_

My work is: \_\_\_\_\_

Our children are (give names and dates of birth): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ We have \_\_\_\_\_ grandchildren.



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# Family History Survey

Organizations I have been involved in are: \_\_\_\_\_

The church we belong to is: \_\_\_\_\_

Some hobbies we enjoy are: \_\_\_\_\_

Tell about some early memories of your hometown, or about Josephine County when you first came here: \_\_\_\_\_

Tell about something special that happened to your family: \_\_\_\_\_

A special honor that I received was: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*Please note that all blanks need not be filled in.\*\***

## Float the River with the Josephine County Historical Society and **HELLGATE JETBOAT EXCURSIONS**

Coming up on Saturday, June 12, the Society will be sponsoring a scenic, two-hour jetboat trip on the Rogue River in cooperation with Hellgate Jetboat Excursions, courtesy of Robert Hamlyn, JCHS member.

An experienced jetboat pilot will maneuver the boat through the raging Rogue River while Bob Pruitt, long-time river guide who has escorted such famous personalities as Shirley Temple Black, Gregory Peck and Edward R. Murrow down the river, will be our guide. *Seats are limited*, so fill out the form below, and *mail this form, along with a check made payable to JCHS to: JCHS, 512 SW 5th Street, Grants Pass, OR 97526.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of seats \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$25.00 per person = total payment enclosed of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Trip participants will meet no later than 9:30 a.m. at  
Hellgate Jetboat Excursions  
966 SW 6th Street, Grants Pass, OR 97526  
\*\*\*10:00 a.m. departure\*\*\*



### Letters to the Editor, cont. from p. 2

#### JCHS:

Thank you for the *Josephine County Historical Highlights Volumes I & II*. I am really enjoying Volume I.

I continue to enjoy *Mondays Make History*. I cut them to save as I have since May 6, 1991.

**Billie J. Marriott**

**Winner of the MMH crossword puzzle**

#### Michael Oaks:

Certainly enjoyed reading your *Mondays Make History* articles about myself! The second part with the history and some old pictures brought back some fond memories of my childhood days growing up in Grants Pass. I was very fortunate to be in Grants Pass at that time!

I am very appreciative of your recognition of some of my accomplishments and the credit given to the great heritage I was so lucky to have. Thank you.

**Bill Dellinger**  
**Retired Coach**

### *Tell Your Friends about us. . .* **and you could win the Caveman Bridge!**

Send a friend to our Research Library and we'll give them a 20% discount on their first year's membership in the Society.

All you have to do is write your name and phone number in the space below and give it to a friend. When they visit the Research Library with this form, you will automatically be entered to win a beautifully matted 19" x 33" print of the Caveman Bridge from an original oil painting by Ginger (Croxtan) Ford. Ginger is from a fourth generation Josephine County family whose father worked on the bridge construction in the 1930's.

Support history and do your friends a favor at the same time, but hurry! This offer will end soon.\* The more friends who join, the better your chances of winning.

\_\_\_\_\_  
your name (please print)                      phone number

\*Random drawing on or about August 1, 1999.  
Winner will be notified by either mail or phone.

### **Thank You!**

We appreciate Ginger Ford's donation of prints from her original oil painting of the Caveman Bridge.

### *Welcome New Members!*

Our membership prize for new members in March was won by John and Lois Jones. The Jones' won a gift certificate for a *Hellgate Jetboat Excursions' Champagne Brunch for two*. The Jones' are now our newest business members, representing the Real Estate office of **Century 21 - JC Jones**. We thank them for their membership and wish them well as they "*Jet the Jaws of Hellgate Canyon!*"

Our youngest new member arrived on March 21 at 6:57 p.m. Born to board member Charlie Mitchell and his wife, Julie, **Nathan Richard** weighed in at 6 lbs., 11 oz. and was 19-1/2 inches long.

Congratulations to the proud, first-time parents!

### *A Plea . . .*

Remember me when you turn to see  
an empty *Courier* space.  
And remember you have a story, too,  
that could have filled the place.

If there's a mistake, feel free to make  
a comment or a joke.  
If you don't say, it gets filed that way;  
what isn't fixed, stays broke.

If pioneers will lend their ears  
and hear me when I cry,  
"I need a tale of the olden trail,"  
then that tale will never die.

**Jean Boling**  
**MMH Editor**

## THE OLDTIMER

is the newsletter of the  
**Josephine County Historical Society**  
512 SW 5th Street, Grants Pass, OR 97526  
(541) 479-7827

Annual dues are \$15.00 and include  
a subscription.

**Lee Ann Tardieu -- Editor**

Quarterly circulation of THE OLDTIMER is 650.  
The publishing committee also produces  
an annual historical publication,  
mailed free of charge to  
all members of the society.



## *In Tribute of*

### **THANK YOU!**

*The following members have made donations  
or pledged to help pay off the property debt:*

Dorothy Bobinski  
Judy Boling  
Dawne E. Fox  
Amy L. Hendrickson  
Bob and Jan Lane  
Jean Metcalf  
Les and Paula Poole  
James and Sara Rowen  
Mel and Margie Shaw  
Frank A. Sprinkle  
Tommy Thompson  
Opal Tice  
Percy and Betty Wetherbee

*Don't be left out of the POD! Mail your  
contribution TODAY!*

*The Josephine County Historical Society is grateful  
to the following members whose donations were  
received to help with the Society's general operating  
expenses.*

•  
Don and Barbara Brodner  
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Daniel and Stephanie Burnakus  
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Gregory Moys  
Todd Molinari  
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Nancy Surran  
Marjorie Varner  
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*In memory of...*  
Dorothy Francis  
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Glenda & Joe Bailey and Al & Marilyn Luttrell

•  
*JCHS depends on the generosity of its members.  
Please take a moment to consider how much your  
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Won't you please consider a gift to the  
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### **THE OLDTIMER NEWSLETTER**

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